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complete truth in the realm of the inorganic. Bergson no doubt often says something like this, but his main view surely is that the truths of science are mere convenient, provisional, schematic statements. The point is interesting, as it illustrates a confusion common in these writers. They often imply that it is only in the attempt to understand mental phenomena that the use of our reasoning power is illegitimate, for it does seem absurd to say openly that reasoning cannot lead to any true conclusions in, say, thermo-dynamics. But then philosophy deals not only with mental phenomena, but also, in so far as it discusses problems about matter, space, and time, with the same subject-matter as physics or dynamics, and what is wanted is some pretext for discrediting reason as a weapon of investigation in the whole of philosophy; hence they constantly argue that the special sciences do not give us genuine truths, and thence infer the futility of reasoning about any of the contents of the universe. Thus what it comes to is that intellect is well enough in useful but humdrum occupations like science, but the philosopher who wishes to embrace the whole of reality needs some higher principle. In science our beliefs have to be based on clear and consistent demonstration; this is not amusing enough for philosophers (Professor Goldstein holds, with Bergson, the extraordinary view that logical consistency would make it impossible for anything new or surprising to happen in the universe), who have accordingly discovered the grand principle that in philosophy the proper method is to believe anything that we like.

SYDNEY WATERLOW.

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IDEALISM, POSSIBLE AND IMPOSSIBLE. By Alice Blundell. London: John Ouseley. Pp. 106.

This little work is evidently written by a young writer of ability, but her style is so queer, involved, and tortuous that it is hard to make out what she means.

It contains three essays, the last a clever, learned, but not very effective diatribe against modern democracy, put in the mouth of Pericles; the first a short metaphysical study, which, if I understand it rightly, aims at a comparison between (1) the relation of intellectual apprehension in general to its ob-

jects, and (2) such a relation as that involved in a judgment of value being passed on things in virtue of the interest we take in them practically. For example, we apprehend that a hundred dollars are there, existing 'in space': here we have a relation of general apprehension; but we may also deem them to have an economic value, because, and only because, we connect them with possibilities of pleasure and pain. This connection that we make may fairly be called a mental contribution drawn from our practical nature. Does it, or does it not, 'falsify' the facts? If not, the conclusion is suggested that there might be no reason to shrink from saying that intellectual apprehension in general was a contribution to fact and yet did not falsify it. Miss Blundell refers (p. 16) to what she calls, rightly, I think, "the logically antecedent question whether some fact, into which it (the apprehension) is entering, exists to be interpreted," and she makes the very enigmatic remark that to this question "the relation of apprehension will be theorizable as an indisputable answer." What does this mean? That without apprehension there *is* no fact, of any kind, sort, or description? And if so, is there *any* residuum? And if so, *what*?

The greater part of the book is taken up with a discussion on optimism. At the outset Miss Blundell distinguishes between different forms of teleology and asserts that intellectual teleology contributes little to the question whether the world is worth while. But does not that just depend on what is involved in the ideal of perfectly understanding the world? One thing at least is surely involved: the grasp in some sense of reality. Even if that reality is held not to be outside the thinker's thought, there would still be the reality of the thinker, and until he had, as we might say, 'realized' his own reality, he would not have understood the whole. Now it might be maintained, rightly, in my opinion, that merely to grasp the whole of reality and know it, even if that reality were evil, would be in itself a great good. Miss Blundell says thought "cares nothing for reality," but it is difficult to see how she could defend that. Perhaps she only means "a reality which it could not in any sense conceive." There is the still more important question whether even the intellect could be satisfied without an answer to the question *Why?* and whether that answer could ever be given except from a point of view that saw all things working ultimately to the production of good. But it may be granted

that no system has yet reached such a point of view, and, of course, in any case to have a sound judgment of value is not the same as to be sure that things embodying those values exist or will exist.

Miss Blundell's general survey leads to the conclusion that thoroughgoing optimism must be given up: a wide surplus of pain is here, among finite beings in this world, and even absolute pleasure in the Absolute could not cancel this. But the argument in point depends on the precise relation between the Absolute and the finite. Moreover, as in all questions between 'optimism' and 'pessimism,' the further question of immortality is of supreme importance, and apparently Miss Blundell holds (p. 43) that the unknown possibilities of life after death should make us suspend our final judgment.

The 'Experience of Beauty' she sweeps aside as of little use for optimism, somewhat too hastily, for the astonishing fact remains that a Shakspeare can so write a drama in which an Iago appears as to bring comfort in some mysterious way to the soul. Nor will she admit that the production of moral goodness can justify the suffering in the world, although she grants that "no accumulation of lesser goodness could compare with the rarest good grown in the worst wrongnesses in the world." Miss Blundell attacks the old problems with life and courage and does not shrink from crossing swords with such a writer as Bradley, but her conclusions are almost always fired at the reader far too much in the 'pistol-shot' fashion.

F. MELIAN STAWELL.

London.

THE VITALITY OF PLATONISM AND OTHER ESSAYS. By James Adam. Cambridge: University Press, 1911. Pp. viii, 242.

We have here a collection of papers put together after the death of their author, a distinguished Cambridge scholar. The first five are variations on a central and evidently a favorite theme,—the thought, namely, that there runs through the whole of Greek philosophy and poetry a chain of ideas which leads up to and is substantially identical with the leading principle of Christian theology. This principle is the doctrine of the divine immanence, and though the author's object is to do no more than expound and illustrate it by quotations from poets, philosophers,